Gender–responsive climate action: Why and How

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OUTLINE

- Part I: Normative Foundation
- Part II: Climate Change Impacts
- Part III: The Climate Change Process
  - Integrating a gender perspective
Normative foundations seek to realize the human rights of all and to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

Women and girls experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination; Structural inequalities constrain women and girls’ responses to climate change.

The climate change process provides a promising example of integrating a gender perspective in a “technical” / non-social thematic area.
**Normative Foundations**

- **Rio Declaration on Environment and Development**
  - Women have a vital role in environmental management and development. Their **full participation is essential** to achieve sustainable development.

- **Chapter 24 of Agenda 21**
  - Effective implementation of sustainable development programmes will depend on the **active involvement of women** in economic and political decision-making.

- **CEDAW – Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women**
  - The full and complete development of a country, the welfare of the world and the cause of peace require the **maximum participation of women** on equal terms with men in all fields.

- **The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (Concluding Observations on State Party reports):**
  - underscored that “All stakeholders should ensure that climate change and disaster risk reduction measures are gender-responsive, sensitive to indigenous knowledge systems and respect human rights.
  - Women’s right to **participate at all levels of decision-making** must be guaranteed in climate change policies and programmes.”
**2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

- **Grounded** in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- **Pledge** to “leave no one behind”
- **Vision**: a world of *universal respect for human rights* and human dignity, justice, equality and non-discrimination; of respect for race, ethnicity and cultural diversity;
- A world in which every woman and girl enjoys *full gender equality*
- Emphasized the *responsibilities of all States*, to respect, protect and promote human rights, without distinction of any kind;
- Highlighted *gender equality and women’s empowerment* and the *systematic mainstreaming of a gender perspective* are crucial in the implementation of the Agenda
- **Follow-up and review processes** at all levels: will be people-centred, gender-sensitive, respect human rights and have a particular focus on the poorest, most vulnerable and those furthest behind.
Preamble:
- ... Parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, ... the rights of indigenous peoples, ... migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations and the right to development, as well as gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity.

Article 7
- Parties acknowledge that adaptation action should follow a country-driven, gender-responsive, participatory and fully transparent approach ...

Article 11
- Capacity-building should be guided by lessons learned ... and should be an effective, iterative process that is participatory, cross-cutting and gender-responsive.
Nexus approach for the SDGs

No SDG nor target on human rights, thus, HR is not at all captured
Women lack or do not have access to resources due to discriminatory socio-cultural norms and practices and barriers to decision-making

- Women comprise 43% of the agricultural labour force in developing countries;
- In sub-Saharan Africa, 59% of women are in informal agricultural employment;
- Less than 20% of agricultural landholders worldwide are women;
- Only 22% of rural women in low-income countries hold bank accounts;
- Total agricultural outputs in Africa could increase by up to 20% if women’s access to agricultural inputs was equal to men’s

Women disproportionately bear the burden of energy poverty

- In northern Nigeria, a village woman can spend 60 to 80 times more for energy than a resident of an industrialized country;
- Women face significant health and safety risks: from household air pollution, carrying heavy fuel loads, exposure to smoke from solid fuels.
- Only 20% of the renewable energy workforce is women.
Impacts

- In disasters, women and girls are among those severely affected:
  - More than 70% of the fatalities from the 2004 tsunami in Sri Lanka and Indonesia were women.
  - 61% of those killed by Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar in 2008, were women and girls.
  - The death toll for women and girls following the earthquake in Nepal in 2015 was 55%.
  - There is still a lack of data and understanding of the gender dimensions of disaster risk.
    - Sixty-two of 70 reporting countries within the mid-term review of the Hyogo Framework of Action did not collect gender-disaggregated vulnerability and capacity information during the period 2009–2011.
Key Message:

The UNFCCC process is a promising example of successful integration of a gender perspective

... but not without challenges and obstacles
Water scarcity:
- 62% of women and 9% of girls were responsible for the burden of water collection. Women are increasingly vulnerable as water scarcity and climate change impacts affect access to safe and sustainable water resources.
- Women and girls are responsible for collecting, storing and using water, while men are the decision-makers in water resources planning and management at local and national levels.

Disasters:
- Research shows that the multiple discriminations that women face are key underlying drivers that make women more vulnerable in crises and post-disaster situations. Following the 1991 cyclone in Bangladesh, the female death rate within the age group 20-44 was 71 per 1,000, compared to 15 per 1,000 for men. Similarly, in Indonesia and Sri Lanka, more than 70% of the fatalities from the 2004 tsunami were women. When Cyclone Nargis hit Myanmar in 2008, 61% of the fatalities were women.
- There is still a lack of data and understanding of the gender dimensions of disaster risk. Sixty-two of 70 reporting countries within the midterm review of the Hyogo Framework of Action did not collect gender-disaggregated vulnerability and capacity information during the period 2009-2011.
Milestones

- **Cancun Agreements (COP 17):** recognized gender equality and equal participation of women as a cross-cutting principle in climate policy and action.

- **COP 18:** Decision on Promoting gender balance and improving the participation of women in UNFCCC negotiations and in the representation of Parties in constituted bodies:
  - Put gender and climate as a standing agenda item of the COP
  - Established a reporting mechanism

- **Lima work programme on gender:** shifted focus from gender balance to systematic integration of gender perspective in climate policies and gender-responsive climate action.
Successes and opportunities

- In-session workshops and technical papers / submissions are opportunities to share experiences and learn from each other;
  - Awareness about the relevance and importance of the issue is much higher than 10 years ago

- Consistently high engagement by Parties, UNFCCC Secretariat, other stakeholders (UN Women, Women and Gender Constituency); and Strong collaboration among actors (Party and non-Party stakeholders implementation)

- Targeted training and funding of participation of women from LDCs, voices now heard in negotiations, providing leadership for others

- Extensive network of non-Party stakeholders who contribute substantively to the process and in implementation e.g. Global Gender and Climate Alliance

- The Financial Mechanisms under the Convention (Global Environment Facility and Green Climate Fund) have gender policies and action plans in place
Promising Practices

- Need a diverse group of countries to ‘champion’ the issue

- Be creative in implementation -- cooperation and collaboration with partners is critical especially with limited funding

- The role of the secretariat is critical, so are key stakeholders

- Important to identify relevant entry points in existing processes and workstreams
Challenges

- Barriers remain:
  - mainstreaming gender / integrating a gender perspective in UNFCCC thematic areas of work
  - implementing UNFCCC decisions at the national level
- Due to lack of (or refusal to) understand the issue / interlinkages of GE / CC?
- Silos in government ministries or agencies?
- Existing / persisting structural and societal inequalities
- Insufficient funds allocated in building capacity on gender and climate change across all sectors
- Policy and plans not translating into sustained action or transformation at or after implementation
Check out these resources:

Technical paper on guidelines or other tools for integrating gender considerations into climate change-related activities under the Convention
http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2016/tp/02.pdf

Monitoring gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Opportunities and Challenges

UN Women’s Flagship Programmes
http://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/programme-and-technical-assistance#flagship

A Nexus Approach For The SDGs: Interlinkages between the goals and targets